

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 4, 2011

Mayor William V. "Bill" Bell
Mayor Susant Kluttz
Mayor Anthony Foxx
Mayor Allen Joines

Mayor Terry Bellamy
Mayor Jennifer Stultz
Mayor Rebecca Smothers
Mayor J. Scott Padgett

Dear Members of the North Carolina Metropolitan Mayors Coalition,

Thank you for your recent letter in which you sensibly urge Washington to end its partisan bickering in favor of bipartisan compromise. I could not agree more. Our federal elected officials waste far too much time posturing and name-calling. Instead, as any North Carolinian will tell you, our sustained focus needs to be on getting the economy back on track for the hundreds of thousands of North Carolinians still out of work and the millions more struggling to make ends meet. Fostering job growth needs to be priorities number one, two and three.

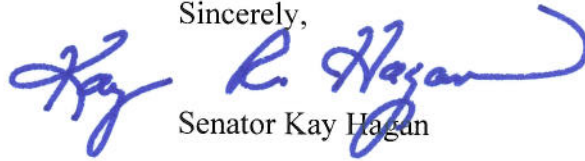
This week, the President signed a bill that averts a default crisis without relying on short-term patches that would have left the markets in turmoil and threatened harm to our seniors, our veterans and our active duty military. While this legislation was not all it could be, it is my belief we could not wait another day to begin to get our fiscal house in order. The status quo is simply unacceptable.

As a former co-chair of the North Carolina State Senate Budget Committee, I am proud of our record of passing bipartisan budgets, and note that North Carolina today is one of only seven states in the country with a triple-A credit rating from all three nationally-recognized credit rating agencies. A robust credit rating reduces borrowing costs, which then allows North Carolina to reinvest in our cities' infrastructure and our children's education. This in turn helps create a welcoming environment for new businesses to open and for existing ones to expand. And new and expanding businesses means jobs. North Carolina's excellent credit rating should never be put at risk simply because Washington cannot put commonsense policymaking ahead of party affiliation.

Last month, I went on a statewide Budget Listening Tour. I convened community and business leaders in Charlotte, Greensboro, Raleigh and Wilmington and ended the tour with a roundtable discussion at UNC Chapel Hill with fiscal policy and budget experts, including John Spratt, former U.S. House Budget Chairman and a member of the Bowles-Simpson National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform. Though our constituents who participated in the listening tour represented diverse communities, they delivered one message loud and clear: North Carolina wants Washington to put aside divisive party concerns and come together for the sake of the country with solutions to help our economy grow and put people back to work. I assure you I got the message.

I look forward to continue working with you as partners in representing the great state of North Carolina.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Kay R. Hagan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end of the name "Hagan".

Senator Kay Hagan